

[Mr. Deputy-Speaker]

with Rules 4 and 5 of the Central Silk Board Rules 1955, the Members of this House do proceed to elect, in such manner as the Speaker may direct, one member from among themselves to be a member of the Central Silk Board vice Shri M. V. Chandrashekara Murthy resigned."

The motion was adopted.

12.46 hrs

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

(i) ESTABLISHMENT OF A RUBBER BASED INDUSTRY IN KANYA KUMARI DISTRICT.

SHRI N. DENNIS (Nagercoil): Under rule 377, I am making a statement.

Kanya Kumari District is the most suitable and appropriate place in the country for the establishment of Rubber based industries or a tyre factory. Per acre production of rubber here is the highest in our country and qualitatively also it occupies the highest place. It occupies the second place in the quantity of production of rubber. It is next only to Kerala. Though Kanya Kumari District is classified as an industrially backward district, not even a single industry either in the public sector or in the private sector is established here. Other basic amenities are also available there for the establishment of industries. The percentage of literacy in this district is high. There are large number of educated and uneducated unemployed people there. So, government may be pleased to consider the representation favourably by passing early orders for the establishment of rubber based industries or a tyre factory in Kanya Kumari District.

(ii) SUPPLY OF COAL TO ONGOLE IN ANDHRA PRADESH FOR TOBACCO CURING PROCESS.

SHRI P. RAJAGOPAL NAIDU (Chittoor): Under Rule 377, I am making a statement.

Tobacco curing season is from December to March. There are about 35,000 tobacco curing burns in Andhra Pradesh, majority of which are in Prakasam District.

More than three lakh tonnes are required for curing tobacco. Coal indents for the entire requirement of tobacco curing industry are placed with the Singareni Collieries Co. Ltd., Hyderabad. This time the above collieries supplied only 75,000 tonnes of coal this year which is not even 1/4th of the requirement.

Though the collieries requested the Railway authorities, they are pleading their inability to supply coal to tobacco growers saying that due to the shortage of production in the coal mines, the railways are moving the entire production to power houses and railways only, on instructions from the Railway Board.

Tobacco curing is seasonal and if coal is not supplied before March this year the tobacco growers will suffer very much. The loss will cross, crores of rupees. That will not only hit the farmers but also affect the Government due to reduction of foreign exchange.

I, therefore, request the Railway Minister to see that at least one rake of coal is moved every day to Ongole to help the tobacco curing process.

I am glad to say that one rake of coal has arrived but many more are needed.

(ii) CRISIS IN CASHEW INDUSTRY IN KERALA

SHRI P. K. KODIYAN (Adoor): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir; the cashew industry in Kerala which employs 1.5 lakh workers is facing crisis due to acute shortage of imported raw nuts and the systematic attempts by private cashew processors to clandestinely shift the processing to the neighbouring States of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka where they could exploit cheap labour.

The indigenous production of cashew nuts will hardly meet 1/4th of the total requirements of the industry. Hence the industry had to depend on heavy import of raw nuts from African countries. Since 1970, a well thought out and sensible plan was adopted by the Centre by which the import was channelised through the Cashew Corporation of India. This plan was adopted to save the industry from the ruinous and cut-throat competition in which the cashew processors were involved resulting in closure of a number of factories and large-scale unemployment among the workers.

But the trouble again started when the Kerala Government enforced minimum wages and extended other legal benefits to the workers. The bigger processors then deliberately kept some of their units idle rendering thousands of workers unemployed and clandestinely started the processing in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka using the cheap labour available there. To save the industry and the workers, Kerala Government set up the Cashew Development Corporation which took over some of the closed factories. The Corporation has now 35 factories employing more than 35,000 workers.

Government of India now seems to have brought about some changes in the import of cashew nuts. Though they have not amended the basic policy on canalisation of import, they have permitted private cashew processors to import cashew nuts from non-traditional sources subject to the condition that 50 per cent of the import be handed over to the Cashew Corporation of India. This import will harm the interests of the cashew industry in Kerala. The privately imported nuts did not come to Kerala. They were processed outside the State even though the importers are the same cashew manufacturers of Kerala doing the import under different names. At the same time, the request of the Kerala Government to permit the Cashew Development Corporation import of nuts for its own use was rejected by the Centre.

4400 LS-10.

The Cashew Corporation of India is not making all out efforts to increase the import. Last year, the import was almost negligible. Hence I would request the Central Government to take up the issue of import of cashew nuts at the highest level with the concerned African countries and import maximum quantity of raw cashew nuts through the Cashew Corporation of India and make the imported nuts available to the factories. Under no circumstances private processors be allowed to import cashew nuts.

At the same time, I would request the Centre to persuade the southern States to agree to uniform wage rates in the cashew industry so that the cheap labour available in one State will not be allowed to be used to the detriment of the industry in the other States.

(iv) FUNDS FOR DROUGHT AND DRINKING WATER SCARCITY IN TAMIL NADU

SHRI S. A. DORAI SEBASTIAN (Karur): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, most of the districts in Tamil Nadu are very badly affected by the drought due to failure of monsoon during the year 1980-81. It is understood that the Central Government would be sending a Fact-finding Team to assess the situation and demand of the worst drought-hit area of Tamil Nadu and the team will submit its report very shortly.

After the 1977 cyclone and heavy flood, the rain completely failed and until now there has been no rainfall in Tamil Nadu State with the result that the drinking water scarcity is prevailing everywhere. The farm labourers, small and marginal farmers, agricultural coolies and wage-earners are on the verge of vacating their villages and even cattles are not able to survive.

Bulls, calves, cows and buffalos numbering more than 1,500 have died in some places of Tiruchirapalli district due to epidemic 'Foot and Mouth' disease. It also appears that the disease is now spreading like wild-fire all over the district. Veterinary Hospitals are